Rachel Mitten House Westminster

c. 1854-1856

#### **Summary:**

The Rachel Mitten House is located on a lot that was sold at public sale to William Reese for \$111 in October 1852. Just over a year later Reese sold it to Noah Mitten for \$200. The price suggests that there were likely no improvements to the lot. Noah Mitten sold the lot in August 1856 to his mother, Rachel Mitten, for \$400. This probably indicates the construction of the existing log house, then, between 1854 and 1856 for Rachel Mitten. In order to purchase the house, Rachel Mitten borrowed \$100 from her daughter, Christena Mitten. Rachel Mitten died in early 1860. Christena Mitten apparently was living here and continued to do so. The house was advertised for sale in November 1868. In 1877 it was purchased by Sarah A. Miller of Baltimore City and apparently became a rental property. She sold it in 1907 to William Eckard, and it remained in his family until very recently. The main block of the house retains most of its original features and illustrates well a very average house of the period just prior to the Civil War, one that was apparently built for a widow and her unmarried daughters, if not by them.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form MARYLAND INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE \_\_yes \_\_no

1. Nam	<b>le</b> (indicate pr	eferred name)		
historic Rache	el Mitten House			
and/or common				
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	, 317 E. Main Stre	et		not for publication
city, town Wes	stminster	vicinity of	congressional district	
state Maryla	and	county	, Carroll	
3. Clas	sification			
Category  district building(s) structure site object	Ownershippublic private both Public Acquisition in process being considered xnot applicable	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	rty (give names	and mailing addresses	of <u>all</u> owners)
name John ar	nd Laurie Schmidt			
street & number	317 E. Main Stree	t	telephone no	.: 857-1363
city, town West	tminster	stat	e and zip code MD 2	1157
5. Loca	ation of Leg	al Descript	ion	
courthouse, regi	stry of deeds, etc. Cour	thouse Annex		liber LWS 1666
street & number	55 North Court St	reet		folio 612
city, town Wes	stminster		state	Maryland
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Surve	eys
title				
date			federal state	county local
pository for su	rvey records			
city, town			state	

# 7. Description

Survey No. CARR-1427

Condition —— excellent —— good —— fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaltered X altered	Check one _X_ original site moved date of move	
	ruins		_	

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

#### **Summary:**

The Rachel Mitten House is located at 317 East Main Street in Westminster, in central Carroll County, Maryland. The house faces southwest toward the road and is a two-story, three-bay by one-bay log structure with a rubble stone foundation, aluminum siding, and a gable roof of pressed metal shingles. There is a two-story, four-bay by one-bay ell on the rear or northeast elevation. On the southwest elevation the first story has a center entrance with a twelve-light door. The surround has fluted Doric pilasters. There are new 1/1 sash. There is a cellar under the main block of the house only. The first story has a hall-parlor plan with an ell. The front door opens into the northwest room. The northwest wall has a closed-off fireplace with a wood mantel. In the wall a horizontal beam is exposed that probably indicates a log structure. North of the fireplace is an enclosed winder stair. The ell has been remodeled as a kitchen. This was originally two rooms. The northeast end appears to be a frame addition. The second-story plan is identical to the first, but with two rooms in the ell. The southwest ell chamber possibly originally had a lower roofline and the roof was raised to make it a full two stories. The attic is not floored.

## Contributing Resources: 1

The Rachel Mitten House is located at 317 East Main Street in Westminster, in central Carroll County, Maryland. The house faces southwest toward the road and is a two-story, three-bay by one-bay log structure with a rubble stone foundation, aluminum siding, and a gable roof of pressed metal shingles with a northwest-to-southeast running ridge. There is a two-story, four-bay by one-bay ell on the rear or northeast elevation. It also has aluminum siding and has a standing-seam metal gable roof with a northeast-to-southwest ridge.

On the southwest elevation, the foundation has a cast iron grate in the west bay that has a circle in the center, with diamond-pattern openings, and it is hung on hinges. The first story has a center entrance with a twelve-light door. The surround has fluted Doric pilasters. The capitals have a Greek ovolo above a quirked Greek ogee and bevel. There is an ogee moulding on the cornice with a fillet below. There is a new 1/1 sash on either side of the doorway. The second story has three new 1/1 sash. There is an interior brick chimney on the northwest. The southeast elevation has no openings, as there is only about 18 inches between this house and the house to the east.

The northwest elevation on the first story has a new 1/1 sash set west of center. The second story has no openings, and the gable end has a four-light sash set west of center. The

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Description (continued)

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northwest elevation of the ell on the first story has a projecting one-bay room with a 6/6 sash to the north. The southwest elevation of this projecting room has a beaded-edge, vertical-board door hung on cast iron butt hinges. The cast iron rim lock is marked "PATENTED MAY.3.18[63?] JUNE[7?]18[64?]". The architrave has a beaded interior edge, but the rest of it is covered now. There is a one-story porch on the first story between the projecting bay to the north and the main block to the west. This porch has three square boxed posts and a shed roof with asphalt shingles. The three bays of the first story have paired 6/6 sash, paired 6/6 sash in the center, and a fifteen-light door to the west that has an architrave that is covered and does have a beaded interior edge. There is a hatch in the deck of the porch that leads to the cellar stairs. The second story, north, north-center, and west bays, each have a six-light casement.

The northeast elevation of the main block has no openings on the first story. The second story has a 6/6 double-hung sash in the north bay. The northeast elevation of the ell has an interior brick chimney centered on the ridge. The first story has no openings. The second story has a 6/6 sash set east of center.

There is a cellar under the main block of the house only. The northwest end of the cellar has corbelled stone and brick that supports the fireplace above. The brick may have been added when the furnace was connected into the flue. There is a metal plate for a clean-out over the brick, and it is painted with "SMITH & REIFSNID" and "WESTMINSTER MARY"; soft mortar is used in the brick. The joists run northeast to southwest, and are hewn on top and bottom. They are 9 to 11 inches wide. The depth could not be determined, and they are spaced 28 inches on centers. They rest on an approximately 1-inch-thick board set on the foundation. There is a crawl space under the ell that has sawn joists approximately 2 x 8 inches. They appear to be mill sawn, but there are not a lot of clear tool marks.

The first story has a hall-parlor plan with an ell. The front door opens into the northwest room. The northwest wall has a closed off fireplace with a wood mantel that has plain thin pilaster strips and a plain frieze. There is a plain fillet bed mould. Above the window on the northwest elevation is a hole in the plaster wall, in which a horizontal beam is exposed that probably indicates a log structure. There is vertical sawn lath with cut nails, and no clear saw marks were visible on the lath. North of the fireplace is an enclosed winder stair with a beaded-edge, vertical-board door hung on plain cast iron butt hinges. It has a cast iron suffolk latch. The hinge screws are not pointed. The architraves have a broken field with a beaded interior edge and are mitered at the corners. The baseboards are plain. The floor is covered, and some of the walls have been sheet-rocked. The southeast wall has a doorway with the same architrave.

Description (continued)

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The southeast room has the same architrave and baseboard. There is a door to the ell on the northeast that has beaded edge vertical boards, plain cast iron butt hinges, and a cast iron suffolk latch like that on the stair door. The ell has been remodeled as a kitchen. There is apparently a fireplace centered on the northeast wall, but it has been covered over. There is a winder stair in the east corner that has been opened up. The stair stringer is mill sawn. There is a beaded-edge, vertical-board door on cast iron butt hinges that has a cast iron foliate handle. There is a closet under the stairs. The hinges have pointed screws. There is a hewn joist in the ceiling of this closet that is now exposed. The southeast wall is narrower on the northeast half of the room than it is on the southwest half of the room, suggesting that this was originally two rooms. The northeast addition appears to be frame, as there is a sawn stud in the southeast wall, and because the southeast wall was thinner on the northeast section than it is on the southeast section.

The second-story plan is identical to the first, but with two rooms in the ell. The second-story walls have vertical lath. Most have straight diagonal saw marks, but one appears to be circular sawn. They are fastened with cut nails. The northwest chamber at the top of the winder stair has three horizontal rails around it and a gate with five rails that are mortised-and-tenoned-and-pegged into end stiles. The gate is hung on small cast iron butt hinges. It is unique and seems to be early, if not original. There is a chimney on the northwest, and next to it a hatch in the ceiling that leads to the attic. The wall on the southeast has a beaded-edge, vertical-board door. It has butt hinges that appear too shiny to be cast iron. It has a cast iron suffolk latch like those found on the first story. The architraves have a beaded interior edge and are mitered at the corners. The baseboard is plain.

The southeast chamber has random-width flooring that appears to be pine. It is 3 to 4½ inches wide and runs northwest to southeast. The southeast chamber has a peg rail on the northwest wall. It has the same baseboard and architrave as found in the northwest chamber. There is a door on the northeast wall that leads to the ell. The architrave here has a small, beaded interior edge that is different than the rest of the room, indicating this is not an original opening. The beaded vertical-board door here is hung on plain cast iron butt hinges. They are two-part hinges. The latch is a cast iron foliate one, like on the closet of the first story ell.

In the southwest ell chamber, the northwest and southeast walls are wider at the bottom, and are wider toward the southwest end. They have a board shelf, then a narrower wall above this shelf. Possibly this room originally had a lower roofline and the roof was raised to make it a full two stories. There is a six-light sliding sash turned on its side and used as a casement with cast iron butt hinges on its face. The screws are pointed, but not well done. They are narrower at the tip, but are partially blunt. The ceiling follows the

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Description (continued)

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rafters and collar beam. There is a doorway on the northwest. It has a beaded-edge, vertical-board door hung on plain cast iron butt hinges, and has a cast iron suffolk latch with a hollowed-out handle. The window architrave is plain, and is headcut. The door has the same trim.

The northeast ell chamber floor level is higher than in the southwest ell chamber. It has tongue-and-grooved boards, 3¼ to 5 inches wide, that run northeast to southwest. The northeast ell chamber has the same window sash and trim as the southwest ell chamber, but has different butt hinges on the face of the sash. There is a full 6/6 sash on the northeast wall that also has the same trim as the others in this chamber. The ceiling profile is the same as the other ell chamber. The winder stair in the east corner is open at the top, and has a balustrade with three rails.

They must be sawn, but no marks are visible. Only one joist could be measured. It was 3 x 5½ inches. The studs on the northwest wall are sawn and are about 2½ by 2¾ or 2¾ by 3 inches. They are toenailed with cut nails. The rafters are sawn and are 2½ to 3 inches by 3 inches. They are mitered at the ridge with a pole, and are spaced 21½ to 25 inches on centers. There is a board nailed to the ends of the joists and a narrow false plate nailed on top of this board. It is approximately 1 inch square. The rafter feet have a birdsmouth cut that laps over this falseplate. The northwest end girt is hewn on all four sides. The rafters support lath with cut nails, and have later sheathing boards placed between them.

The southwest floor is random width, some of them being 5 inches, but many are 11 to 12½ inches wide. They run northeast to southwest. The east corner has infill in the floor that is nailed down with cut nails. The opening was 22½ inches by 55 inches, which was large for a chimney unless this was a cooking fireplace. There is a trap door on hinges in the southeast end near the south corner. The header in the opening appears to be nailed in from the top through the joists and is probably mortised and tenoned. The tract door does not have battens on its bottom side. There are wide boards on either end with a narrow board in the center. The narrow board has tongues and the wider boards have grooves. The door was nailed down with cut nails and a later joist infill was beneath it to hold the lath for the ceiling infill on the first story in the ell. The lath is sawn, but there are no clear marks. The southeast wall inside the opening in the floor has vertical lath, suggesting that this is a log wall.

8. S	Sign	ificance		Survey No.CARR-	1427
1400 1500 — 1600 — 1700	)—1599 )—1699 )—1799 )—1899	Areas of Significance— archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	Check and justify below  community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlemen industry invention	landscape architectur law literature military music t philosophy politics/government	e religion science sculpture _X social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific	dates	c. 1854-1856	Builder/Architect		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
check:	ar	cable Criteria:A nd/or cable Exception:	A _B _C _D	EFG	
	Leve1	of Significance: _	_nationalstate 2	X_local	
Prepare support	both	a summary paragraph	of significance and	a general statement	of history and
Sui	mmary	0 8			
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The Rachel Mitten House is located on a lot that was sold at public sale to William Reese for \$111 in October 1852. Just over a year later Reese sold it to Noah Mitten for \$200. The price suggests that there were likely no improvements to the lot. Noah Mitten sold the lot in August 1856 to his mother, Rachel Mitten, for \$400. This probably indicates the construction of the existing log house, then, between 1854 and 1856 for Rachel Mitten. In order to purchase the house, Rachel Mitten borrowed \$100 from her daughter, Christena Mitten. Rachel Mitten died in early 1860. Christena Mitten apparently was living here and continued to do so. The house was advertised for sale in November 1868. In 1877 it was purchased by Sarah A. Miller of Baltimore City and apparently became a rental property. She sold it in 1907 to William Eckard, and it remained in his family until very recently. The main block of the house retains most of its original features and illustrates well a very average house of the period just prior to the Civil War, one that was apparently built for a widow and her unmarried daughters, if not by them.

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Development Period: Agriculture-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870'

Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Historic Period Themes: Architecture, Social

Resource Types: Rural vernacular

The Rachel Mitten House is located on a lot that was sold at public sale to William Reese for \$111 in October 1852. Unfortunately, there are no surviving papers to document what existed on the site at that time, but Reese already owned a brick house and dry goods business. Just over a year later Reese sold it to Noah Mitten for \$200. The price suggests that there were likely no improvements to the lot. Noah Mitten sold the lot in August 1856 to his mother, Rachel Mitten, Senior, (widow of Miles Mitten), for \$400. This probably indicates the construction of the existing log house, then, between 1854 and 1856 for Rachel Mitten. In order to purchase the house, Rachel Mitten borrowed \$100 from her daughter, Christena Mitten.

Significance (continued)

Section 8 Page 2

Rachel Mitten died in early 1860. In her will she left her clothing to Christena, and then noted:

"Whereas I am seizes and possesses in fee simple of a House and lot of land, situate in the City, County and State aforesaid, which I purchased from my son Noah Mitten. . . And whereas I am indebted unto my daughter Christena Mitten in the sum of One hundred dollars. . . and which said sum of money I heretofore appropriated towards the purchase of said House and lot of land . . . I hereby will, devise and bequeth aforesaid House and lot of land, together with my whole personal estate, of every description, unto my said daughter Christena Mitten for and during the term of her natural life. If . . . at the death of my said daughter Christena Mitten my said daughters Martha Mitten and Rachel Mitten, or either of them should be living and be unmarried, then and in that case I will devise and bequeath my aforesaid House and lot of land together with so much of my goods and chattels as may then be undestroyed, unto them my said daughters Martha Mitten and Rachel Mitten during the time they shall afterwards remain unmarried. . . . "

The personal estate was not large, but was comfortable, and included:

French Post Bedstead	\$ 3.00	Dining table	4.50
Common " "	2.00	Stove & pipe	4.00
Cooking Stove & fixtures	5.00	1 Bureau	6.00
Dining table	1.50	½ Doz. chairs	3.00
Kitchen Do	.75	3 old chairs	.75
2 Benches	.371/2	1 Rocking Do	.75
Kitchen Safe	1.50	Fether bed pillow	
Wooden chest	\$ .75	& bolster	15.00
		2 Chairs 40	.80

Christena Mitten apparently was living here and continued to do so, as in 1866 her log house and lot were assessed for \$1,000, then re-evaluated and marked down to \$800. The house was advertised for sale in November 1868, and was described as "...a two story LOG HOUSE, with back building attached, and the Lot on which the house is built, situated in the East End of Westminster." The lot contained a well and fruit trees. After its sale, executor Daniel Mitten reported to the Orphan's Court that he was "... Empowered... to dispose of a House + lot... after the death of Christena mitten and marriage of her sisters Rachel & Martha, all of which said Events have transpired..."

The house was purchased by Reuben W. Stem for \$800. Stem mortgaged the property in April 1876, then defaulted and was forced to sell. The sale ad in 1877 does not

# MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Significance (continued)

Section 8 Page 3

mention the lot with the house, for unknown reasons, but it was purchased by Sarah A. Miller of Baltimore City and apparently became a rental property. She sold it in 1907 to William Eckard, and it remained in his family until very recently. It appears that the house originally had one smaller, one story and attic room on the rear, and that this was expanded with an addition to the rear and the creation of a full second story above. The additions appear to be of frame. these changes were made prior to 1918, judging from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, but at present can not be more carefully dated. The main block of the house has had some sheetrock added to the walls, and floors and ceilings covered, but otherwise retains most of its original features and illustrates well a very average house of the period just prior to the Civil War, one that was apparently built for a widow and her unmarried daughters, if not by them.

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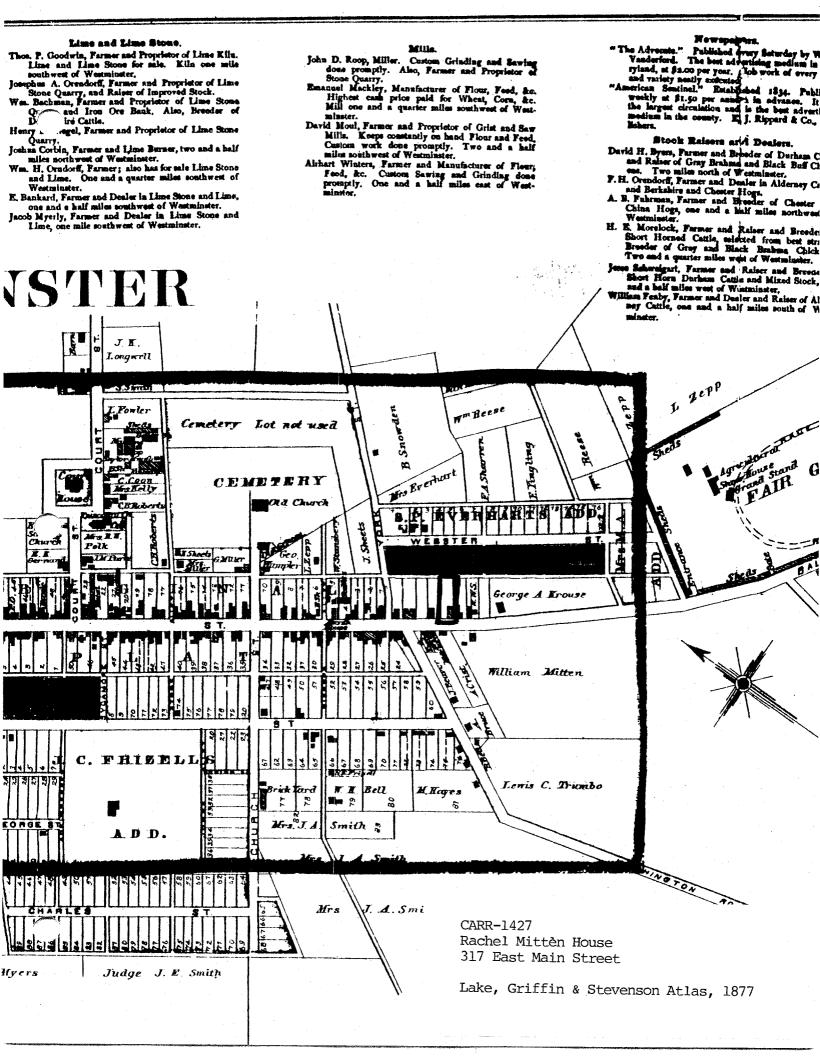
9. Ma	ajor Bibli	ograpnica	i Ketere	nces	Survey No. CARR-14	27
Sanborn F Rachel Mi	sments 1841, l ire Insurance tten will, JB	852, 1866, 1866-7 Maps, 1892, 1918, 2-443, inventory, Nov. 1868, p. 3,	, 1927 , JMP 6-46,			sound plint
10. G	eograph	ical Data				
Quadrangle	nameWestminste	8,175 sq. ft.		Quadrai	ngle scale 1:24000	
A Zone E		mplete UTM refere	ences B Zon	Easting	Northing	
C			D			
Verbal bou	ndary description	n and justification				
List all sta	tes and counties	for properties overla	apping state o	r county boundarie	)S	
state		code	county		code	
state		code	county		code	
11. F	orm Prej	pared By				
name/title	Kenneth M. Sh	ort, Historic Pla	anner			
organization	Carroll Coun	ty Planning Depar	rtment	date July 11,	1995	
street & num	ber 225 North C	enter Street	<i>:</i>	telephone (410)	857-2145	
city or town	Westminster			state Maryland	1	
	an Act of th Code of Mary The survey a record purpo	Historic Sites I e Maryland LegisI land, Article 41, nd inventory are ses only and do r roperty rights.  Maryland Histor Shaw House	lature to be , Section 18 being prepa not constitu	found in the A 1 KA, 1974 supp red for informa	Annotated olement.  ation and ement of ORICAL TRUST	
		21 State Circle Annapolis, Mary (301) 269-2438	71and 21401	CROWNSVILLE, M	ID 21032-2023 -7600	

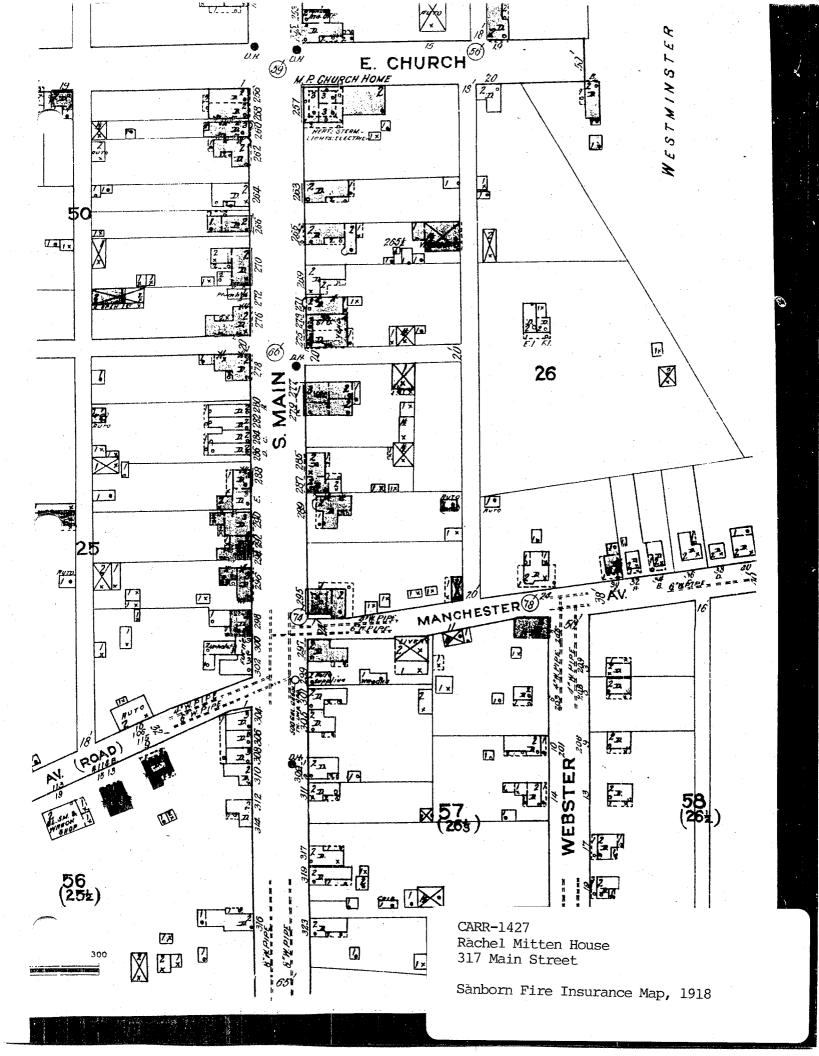
#### CARR-1427 Rachel Mitten House 317 East Main Street

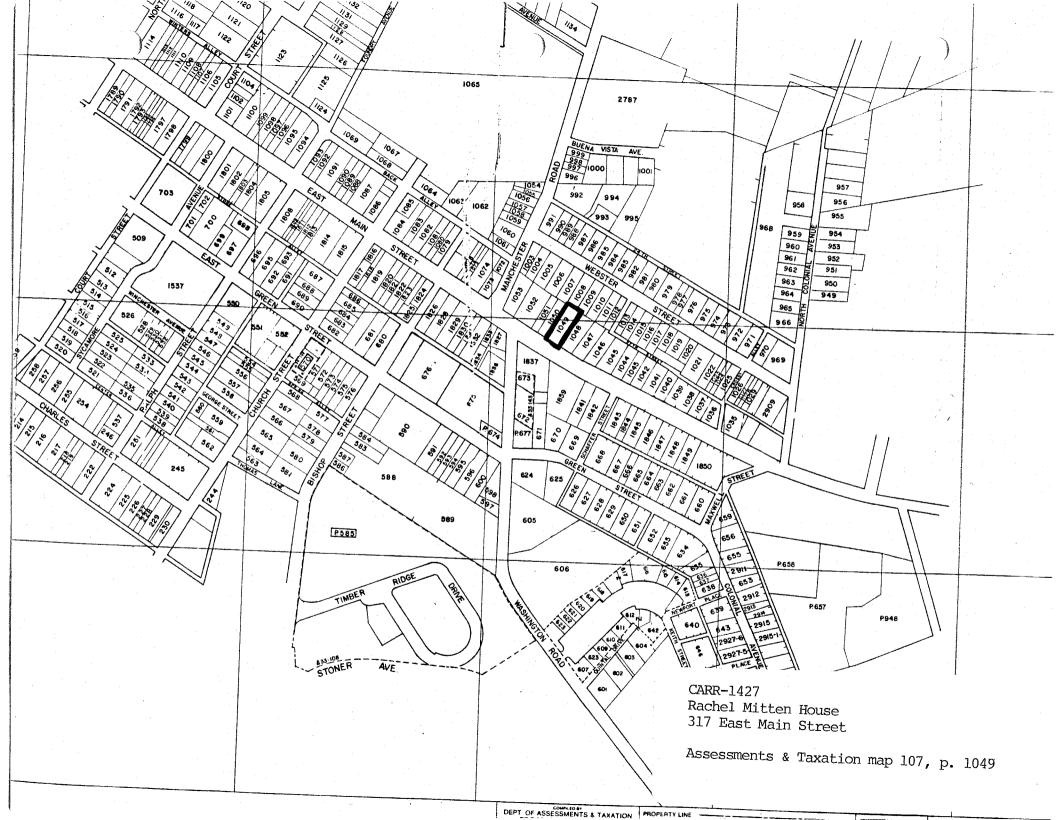
#### CHAIN OF TITLE

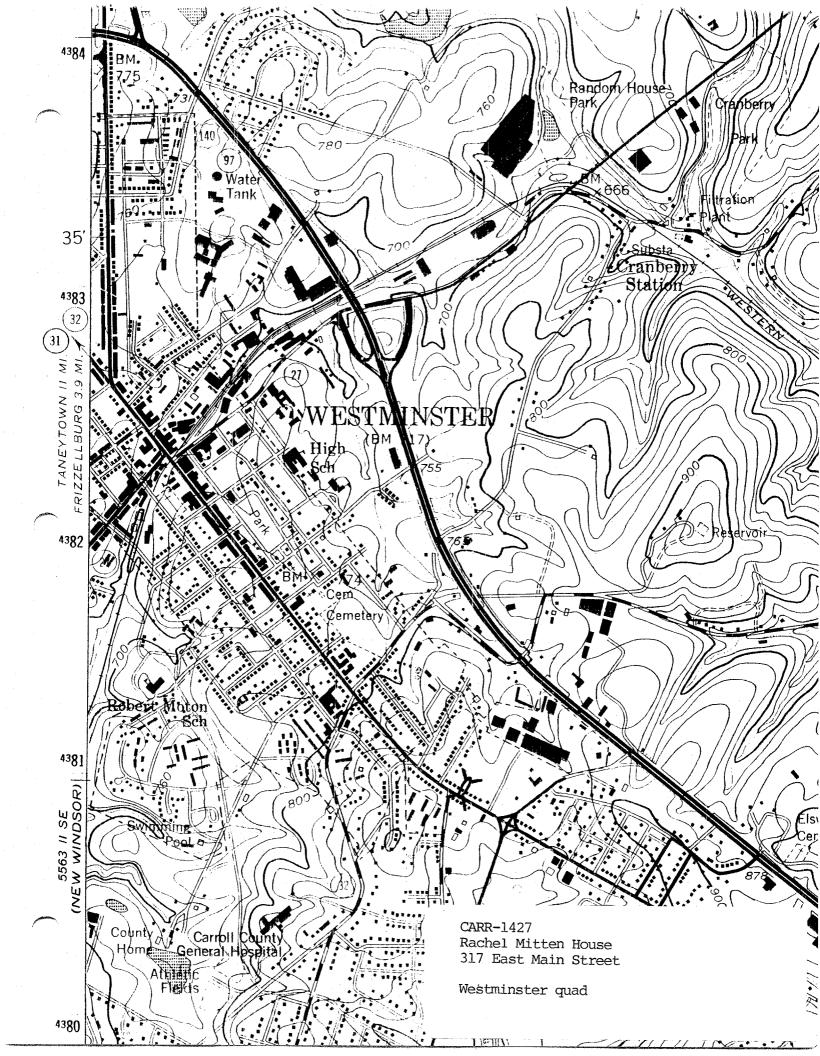
GRANTOR	HOME COUNTY	GRANTEE	HOME COUNTY	DATE	LIBER	FOLIO	TRANS- ACTION	COMMENTS
Joan V. Bradford	Carroll	John Stokes Schmidt & Laurie L. Schmidt (wife)	Carroll	1-19-1995	LWS 1666	612	Deed fee simple	\$9,500, 8,175 sq.ft.
Margaret E. Hoover, attorney for Mary M. Eckard	?	Joan V. Bradford	Carroll	8-31-1993	LWS 1498	957	Deed fee simple	\$55,000, 8,175 sq.ft.
Ruth A. Schmidt, widow	Carroll	Margaret E. Hoover Hilda E. Eckard & John R. Eckard	?	11-30-1955	EAS 264	440	Deed fee simple	\$1.00, 8,175 sq.ft., 317 East Main Street
Sarah A. Miller	Baltimore City	William M. Eckard	Carroll	5-13-1907	DPS 106	548	Deed fee simple	\$800, 8,175 sq.ft.
John E. Smith, trustee Charles T. Reifsnider & Bettie S. (wife)	Carroll	Sarah A. Miller	Baltimore City	9-28-1881	FTS 56	39	Deed	Equity 12-2-1880 #1680, \$1,000, 8,175 sq.ft.
Daniel Mitten, exec. of Rachel Mitten	Carroll	Reuben W. Stem	Carroll	4-5-1869	JBB 39	44	Deed	\$800, lot in Westminster
Noah & Lydia Mitten (wife)	?	Rachel Mitten Senior	?	8-2-1856	JBB 20	383	Deed fee	\$400, lot in Westminster
William Reese & Sarah Jane (wife)	Carroll	Noah Mitten	Carroll	1-2-1854	JBB 15	546	Deed Indenture	\$200, 1,875 ft.
Jacob Powder, trustee for George Trumbo	Carroll Carroll	William Reese	?	11-1-1853	JBB 15	419	Deed indenture	public sale, 10- 13-1852, \$111, 8,175 ft. [no previous reference]

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CARR - 1427 Rachel Mitten House 317 E. Main St. - Westminster Carroll County, Maryland

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Photo: Kenneh m. Short Date: Jan 1995 N \*\* TE TER

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CARR-1427 Kachel Mitten House 317 E. Main St. - Westminster Carroll County, Maryland Photo: Kenneth m. Short Date: Jan. 1995 Neg. Loc .: Maryland Historical Trust SW every. - doorses 21 xx NNNN2